

REMARKS

The final Official Action has allowed Claims 1, 4-9 and 12-32, but has rejected independent Claim 10 and dependent Claim 11 as being obvious over U.S. Patent No. 5,999,836 to Nelson, et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,671,540 to Hochman. In order to expedite the examination of the present application, independent Claim 10 has now been amended to include those features of independent Claim 18 that were identified in the reasons for allowance by the final Official Action. In particular, independent Claim 10 has been amended to recite that the host medium is illuminated at a plurality of different positions "that cover a broad portion of the host medium to facilitate generation of a shadow image". Claim 10 has also been amended to recite thereafter illuminating the portion of the host medium that contains the shadow image with frequency-modulated signals by "positioning a light source that is capable of emitting light that propagates in a first position proximate the suspicious region but at a position offset from at least one of the suspicious region and a detector in a direction transverse to the first direction." As the recitations added to Claim 10 were previously considered in conjunction with independent Claim 18, it is submitted that this Amendment does not raise new issues and should be substantively considered at this stage of examination.

These recitations that have now been added to independent Claim 10 were identified in the reasons for allowance in conjunction with Claim 18. It is noted, however, that the reasons for allowance of Claim 18 mention the offset relationship of the light source from the detector, while both Claim 18 and Claim 10, as now amended, recite that the light source is offset from at least one of the suspicious region and the detector. As no combination of the cited references teaches or suggests amended independent Claim 10, the rejection of independent Claim 10, as well as Claim 11 which depends therefrom, is therefore overcome.

CONCLUSION

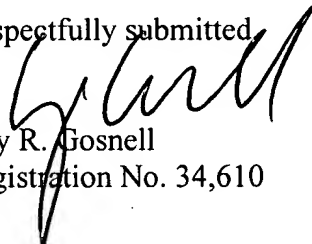
In view of the amendments and the remarks presented above, it is respectfully submitted that all of the claims of the present application are in condition for immediate allowance. It is therefore respectfully requested that a Notice of Allowance be issued. The Examiner is

Appl. No.: 09/531,262
Filed: March 17, 2000
Office Action of May 17, 2005
Amendment of August 17, 2005
Page 11

encouraged to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney to resolve any remaining issues in order to expedite examination of the present application.

It is not believed that extensions of time or fees for net addition of claims are required, beyond those that may otherwise be provided for in documents accompanying this paper. However, in the event that additional extensions of time are necessary to allow consideration of this paper, such extensions are hereby petitioned under 37 CFR § 1.136(a), and any fee required therefore (including fees for net addition of claims) is hereby authorized to be charged to Deposit Account No. 16-0605.

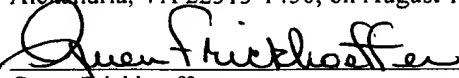
Respectfully submitted,


Guy R. Gosnell
Registration No. 34,610

Customer No. 00826
ALSTON & BIRD LLP
Bank of America Plaza
101 South Tryon Street, Suite 4000
Charlotte, NC 28280-4000
Tel Charlotte Office (704) 444-1000
Fax Charlotte Office (704) 444-1111

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Mail Stop AF, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on August 17, 2005


Gwen Frickhoeffer

CLT01/4681626v2